THE

COURT

OF

NEPTUNE.

A Poem.

ADDRESS'D

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES MONTAGUE Esq.

BY

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THE COURT OF NEPTUNE.

A Poem.

BEgin, Celeſtial Muſe! a tuneful Strain,
Of *Albion's* Prince conducted o'er the Main;
Of Courts conceal'd in Waves, and *Neptune's* wat'ry Reign!
Sing, from beneath, how the Green Deity
Roſe to the Sov'reign of the *Britiſh* Sea;
To Pow'r confeſs'd the Triple Mace reſign'd,
O'er-rul'd the Floods, and charg'd the Rebel Wind;
Secur'd his Paſſage homeward, and reſtor'd
Safe to the loveli'ſt Iſle, the beſt-lov'd Lord.

The generous Name of *Montague* has long
Been fam'd in Verſe, and grac'd the Poet's Song;
In Verſe himſelf can happy Wonders do,
The beſt of Patrons, and of Poets too.

Amidſt

Amidſt the skilful Quire that court his Ear,
If he vouchſafe theſe ruder Lays to hear,
His bright Example, while to him I ſing,
Shall raiſe my feeble Flight, and mount me on the Wing.

On *Albion*'s Eaſtern Coaſt, an * ancient Town
O'erlooks the Sea, to Mariners well known;
Where the ſwift † *Stourus* ends his Snaky Train,
And pays his Wat'ry Tribute to the Main:
Stourus, whoſe Stream, prolifick as it glides,
Two Fertile Counties in its Courſe divides,
And rolls to Sea-ward with a Lover's Pace:
There beauteous *Orwell* meets his fond Embrace;
They mix their amorous Streams, the briny Tide
Receives em joyn'd; their crooked Shores provide
A ſpacious Bay within, for Anchor'd Ships to ride.
Here, on the Margin of the rolling Flood,
Divinely Fair, like Sea-born *Venus*, ſtood
Britannia's Genius, in a Robe array'd
Of broider'd Arms, and Heraldry diſplay'd:
A Crown of Cities charg'd her graceful Brows;
In waving Curls her Hair luxuriant flows;
Cœleſtial Glories in her Eyes are ſeen;
Her Stature tall, Majeſtick is her Mien.
With ſuch a Preſence, thro' th' adoring Skies,
Shines the Great Parent of the Deities;
Such Tow'ry Honours on her Temples riſe,
When drawn by Lions, ſhe proceeds in State:
Trains of Attendant-Gods around her Chariot wait;
The Mother-Goddeſs, with ſuperiour Grace,
Surveys, and numbers o'er her bright Immortal Race.

* Harwich.

† *The River* Stoure, *that runs between* Suffolk *and* Eſſex.

While thus the lovely Genius hovers o'er
The Water's Brink, and from the ſandy Shore

Beholds

Beholds th' alternate Billows fall and riſe,
(By Turns they ſink below, by Turns they mount the Skies.)
And muſt, ſhe ſaid,——
Then paus'd, and drew a Sigh of anxious Love;
Muſt my dear Lord this faithleſs Ocean prove?
Eſcap'd the Chance of War, and Fraud of Foes,
Wilt thou to warning Waves thy ſacred Life expoſe?
Why am I thus divided by the Sea,
From all the World, and all the World in thee?
Cou'd Sighs and Tears the Rage of Tempeſts bind,
With Tears I'd bribe the Seas, with Sighs the Wind.
Soft ſighing Gales thy Canvas ſhou'd inſpire;
But hence ye boiſtrous Storms! far hence retire,
To inland Woods, there your mad Pow'rs appeaſe,
And ſcour the duſty Plains, or ſtrip the Forreſt Trees,
Or lodg'd in hollow Rocks, profoundly ſleep,
And reſt from the loud Labours of the Deep!
Why ſhou'd I fear?——if Heroes be the Care
Of Heav'n above, and Heav'n inclines to Pray'r,
Thou ſail'ſt ſecure; my Sons with lifted Eyes,
And pious Vows, for thee have gain'd the Skies.
Come then my much-lov'd Lord! No more th'Alarms
Of waſtful War requíre thee from my Arms.
Thy Sword gives plenteous Peace, but without thee,
Peace has no Charms, and Plenty's Poverty.
At length enjoy, for whom you've fought, the Queen
Of Iſlands, Bright, majeſtick, and ſerene!
Unveil'd from Clouds, which did her Form diſguiſe,
And hid a thouſand Beauties from thy Eyes.
A thouſand Treaſures unſurvey'd invite,
Their Lord to various Scenes of new Delight.
Come ſee the Dow'r I brought! My ſpacious Downs,
My numerous Counties, and my ancient Towns.

Landskips of rising Mountains, shaggy Woods,
Green Vallies, smiling Meadows, silver Floods,
And Plains with lowing Herds enrich'd around,
The Hills with Flocks, the Flocks with Fleeces crown'd;
All these with native Wealth thy Pow'r maintain,
And bloom with Blessings of thy easie Reign.
Haste, hoist thy Sails! and thro' the foamy Brine,
Rush to my Arms! henceforth be wholly mine;
After Nine toilsome Years, let warlike Labour cease,
And flourish now secure in the soft Arts of Peace!

She said; th'entreated Winds her Accents bore,
And wing'd the Message to the *Belgick* Shore.
The pious Heroe heard, nor cou'd delay
To meet the lovely Voice, that summon'd him away;
The lovely Voice, whose soft complaining Charms
Before had call'd the Succour of his Arms,
Nor call'd in vain; when fir'd with generous Rage
T'oppose the Fury of a barbarous Age,
Like *Jove* with awful Thunder in his Hand,
Thro' Storms and Fleets at Sea, and Foes at Land
He urg'd his daring Way; before his Sight
On Silver Wings bright Glory took her Flight,
And left to guide his Course long shining Tracks of Light.

And now once more embarqu'd, propitious Gales
Blow fresh from Shore, and fill his hollow Sails.
As when the golden God that rules the Day
Drives down his flaming Chariot to the Sea,
And leaves the Nations here involv'd in Night,
To distant Regions he transports his Light;
So *William*'s Rays by turns two Nations cheer,
And when he sets to them, he rises here.

Forſaken *Belgia*, e're the Ship withdrew,
Shed generous Tears, and breath'd this ſoft Adieu.
Since Empire calls thee, and a glorious Throne,
Thy People's weighty Int'reſts, and thy own;
(Tho' ſtrugling Love wou'd fain perſwade thy Stay)
Go, where thy better Fortune leads the Way!
Mean while my Loſs allows me to complain,
And wiſh——ah no! that partial Wiſh were vain.
Tho' honour'd *Crete* had nurs'd the thundring God,
Crete was not always bleſt with his Abode;
Nor was it fit that *William*'s Godlike Mind,
For Nations born, ſhou'd be to One confin'd.
This only grant, ſince I muſt ask no more,
Reviſit once again your Native Shore!
That Hope my Sorrows ſhall beguile, and thou
My happy Rival! wilt that Hope allow;
'Tis all th'Enjoyment Fate has left me now.
So may'ſt thou, fair *Britannia*! ever be
Firm to thy Sov'reign's Love, and his to thee!
While widow'd I—there riſing Sighs repreſs'd
Her fainting Voice, and ſtiff'd in the reſt.

Now while the bounding Veſſel drives before
The guſty Gales, and leaves the leſs'ning Shore,
Behold the parting Clouds to Diſtance fly!
And Golden Glories pouring from on high
New dreſs the Day, and cheer th'enlightn'd Sky.
One ſhooting Beam, like Lightning doubly bright,
Darts on the Midle Main its ſtreaming Light.
Lo! *William*'s Guardian Angel there deſcends;
To *Neptune*'s Court his heavenly Meſſage tends.
In Arms cœleſtial how he ſhines afar,
Like *Pallas* marching to th'awaken'd War!

His Left Hand gripes a ſpacious Orb of Shield
With thouſand intercepted Dangers fill'd,
And Deaths of various Kind; his right diſplays
A temper'd Blade that ſpreads a formidable Blaze.
He ſtrikes the Waves, th' obſequious Waves obey,
And opening in a Gulph diſcloſe the downward Way.

O Muſe! by thee conducted down, I dare
The Secrets of the Watry World declare,
For Nothing ſcapes thy View; to thee 'tis giv'n,
To range the Space of Earth, and Seas and Heav'n,
Deſcry a thouſand Forms, conceal'd from mortal Sight,
And in immortal Verſe to give the Viſions Light.

A Rock there lies, in Depth of Sea profound,
About its Clefts rich Beds of Pearl abound,
Where ſportful Nature, covering her Retreat
With flowing Waters, holds her ſecret Seat.
In Woods of Coral intricate ſhe ſtrays,
And wreaths the Shells of Fiſh a thouſand various ways,
And animates the Spawn of all her finny Race.
Th' unnumber'd Species of the fertile Tide
In Shoals around their mighty Mother glide.
From out the Rock's wide Caverns deep below
The ruſhing Ocean riſes to its Flow,
And ebbing here retires; within its ſides
In roomy Caves the God of Seas reſides.
Pillars unhewn of living Stone bear high
His vaulted Courts; in Storms the Billows fly
O're th'ecchoing Roof, like Thunder thro' the Skies,
And warn the Ruler of the Floods to riſe,
And check the raving Winds, and the ſwoln Waves chaſtiſe.
Rich Spoils, by plundring Tempeſts hither born,
An Univerſe of Wealth, the Palace Rooms adorn.

Be-

Before its Entrance broken Wrecks are ſeen
In Heaps deform'd, a melancholy Scene.
But far within, upon a moſſy Throne,
With waſhy Ooze, and Samphire overgrown,
The Sea-green King his forky Scepter rears;
Awful his Aſpect, numerous are his Years.
A Pearly Crown circles his Brows Divine;
His Beard and dewy Hair ſhed trickling Drops of Brine.
The River-Gods, his numerous Progeny,
On Beds of Ruſhes round their Parent lye.
Here *Danube* and the *Rhine*; *Nile*'s ſecret Source
Dwells here conceal'd, hence *Tiber* takes his Courſe.
Hence rapid *Rhodanus* his Current pours,
And iſſuing from his Urn Majeſtick *Padus* roars;
And *Alpheus* ſeeks with ſilent Pace the lov'd *Sicilian* Shores.
But chief in Honour, *Neptune*'s darling Son,
The beauteous *Thames*, lies neareſt to his Throne.
Nor thou, fair *Boyne!* ſhalt paſs unmention'd by,
Already ſung in Strains that ne'er ſhall die.

Theſe, and a thouſand more, whoſe winding Trains
Seek various Lands, the wealthy Sire maintains;
Each Day the fluid Portions he divides,
And fills their craving Urns with freſh recruited Tides.
But not alike; for oft his partial Care
Beſtows on ſome a diſproportion'd Share;
From whence their ſwelling Currents o'er-ſupply'd,
Thro' delug'd Fields in noiſie Triumph ride.

The God was juſt preparing to renew
His daily Task, when ſudden in his View
Appear'd the Guardian Pow'r, all dazling Bright,
And entring, flaſh'd the Caves with Beamy Light.

Boyne, *Rhine*, the *Sambre* on their Banks had ſeen
The glorious Form, and knew his Martial Mien;
In Throngs th' admiring *Nereids* round him preſs'd,
And *Tritons* crowd to view the Heavenly Gueſt.
Then thus advancing, he his Will explains,
O mighty Sovereign of the Liquid Plains!
Haſte, to the Surface of the Deep repair,
This Solemn Day requires thy Preſence there,
To rule the Storms, the riſing Waves reſtrain,
And ſhake thy Scepter o'er the govern'd Main.
By breathing Gales on thy Dominions driv'n,
To thee Three Kingdoms Hopes in Charge are giv'n,
The Glory of the World, and Beſt-belov'd of Heav'n.
Behold him figur'd here!— he ſaid, and held
Refulgent to his View, the Guardian Shield.
On the rich Mould, inwrought with Skill Divine,
Great *Williams* Wars in ſplendid Sculpture ſhine.
Here, how his ſaving Pow'r was firſt diſplay'd,
And *Holland* reſcu'd by his Youthful Aid;
When kindling in his Soul, the Martial Flame
Broke fiercely out, preluding future Fame,
And round the Frontiers dealt avenging Fire;
Swift from the hot Purſuit the blaſted Foes retire.
Then Battels, Sieges, Camps are grav'd afar,
And the long Progreſs of the dreadful War.
Above the reſt, *Seneffe*'s immortal Fight,
In larger Figures, offer'd to the Sight,
With Martial Terror charms, and gives a fierce Delight.
Here the Confederate Troops are forc'd to yield,
Driv'n by unequal Numbers thro' the Field:
With his bright Sword young *Naſſau* there withſtands
Their Flight, with Pray'rs and Blows he urges his Commands,
Upbraids their fainting Force, and boldly throws
Himſelf the firſt amidſt the wondring Foes.

What

What dare not Men, by ſuch a Gen'ral led?
Rallying with Shouts, their *Heroe* at their Head,
Fir'd with new Rage, aſham'd they once did fly,
Reſolv'd to conquer now, or reſolute to die,
Thro' trampl'd Heaps of Slain they ruſh to Victory.
Earth trembles at the Charge; Death, Blood, and Prey
Inſatiate riot all the murd'rous Day;
Nor peaceful Night it ſelf their Fury can allay,
Till the pale Moon, that ſickens at the Sight,
Retires behind a Cloud, to blind the bloody Fight.

Again, the Shield in Savage Proſpect ſhows
An ancient * Abby, which rough Woods incloſe;
And Precipices vaſt abruptly riſe,
Where, ſafe encamp'd, proud *Luxemburgh* defies
All open Violence, or cloſe Surprize.
But ſee! a ſecond *Hannibal* from far
Up the ſteep Height conducts th' entangl'd War.
Brave *Oſſory*, attended with the Pride
Of *Engliſh* Valour, charges by his Side.
Inclos'd, they fight; the Foreſts ſhine around
With flaſhing Fires, the thunder'd Hills rebound,
And the ſhock'd Country wide beneath rebellows to the Sound.
Forc'd from their Holds, at length they haſte their Flight;
Rich Tents, and Stores of War, the Victor's Toils requite.
Then Peace enſues; and in a ſhining Train
The Friendly Chiefs aſſemble on the Plain.
An ardent Zeal the *Gallick* General warms,
To ſee the Youth that kindl'd ſuch Alarms;
Wondring, he views; ſecure the Soldiers preſs
Round their late Dread, and the glad Treaty bleſs.

* *St.* Dennis *near* Mons.

Next, on the broad Circumference is wrought
The Nine Years War for lov'd *Britannia* fought,

The

The Cauſe the ſame: Fair *Liberty* betray'd,
And baniſh'd *Juſtice*, fly to him for Aid.
Here ſailing Ships are drawn, the crowded Strand,
And Heav'ns Avenger haſting to the Land.
Oppreſſion, Fraud, Confuſion, and Affright,
Fierce Fiends, that ravag'd in the gloomy Night
Of Lawleſs Pow'r, defeated, fly before his dazling Light.
So to th' eclipſing Moon, by the ſtill Side
Of ſome 'lone Thicket, rev'lling Haggs provide
Dire Charms, that threat the ſleeping Neighbourhood,
And quaff, with Magick mix'd, vaſt Bowls of Humane Blood;
But when the Dawn reveals the Purple Eaſt,
They vaniſh ſullen from th' unfiniſh'd Feaſt.
Here joyful Crowds Triumphal Arches rear
To their Deliv'rer's Praiſe, glad Senates there
In ſplendid Pomp the Regal State confer.

Hibernia's Fields new Triumphs then ſupply;
The Rival Kings in Arms the Fate of Empire try.
See where the *Boyne* two Warring Hoſts divides,
And rolls between the Fight his interpoſing Tides!
In vain—— Hills, Foreſts, Streams, muſt all give place
When *William* leads, and Victory's the Chaſe.
Thou ſaw'ſt him, *Boyne!* when thy charg'd Waters bore
The ſwimming Courſers to th' oppoſing Shore,
And round thy Banks thou heard'ſt the murd'ring *Cannons* rore.
What more than Mortal Bravery inſpir'd
The daring Troops, by his Example fir'd!
Thou ſaw'ſt their wondrous Deeds; to *Neptune*'s Court
Thy flying Waves convey'd the ſwift Report,
And Red with Slaughter, to their Father ſhow'd
Streams not their own, and a diſcolour'd Flood.

Here, on th' Ætherial Mould, hurl'd from afar,
Exploded Ball had mark'd a dinted Scar.
'Twas deſtin'd thus; for when all glowing Red
The Angel took it from the Forge, he ſaid,
This Part be left unfated from the Foe!
And ſcarce eſcap'd, once let the *Heroe* know
How much to my Protection he ſhall owe.
Yet from the batterd Shield the Ball ſhall bound,
And on his Arm inflict a Scarlet Wound.

Elſewhere, behold *Namure*'s proud Turrets riſe,
Majeſtick to the Sight, advancing to the Skies!
The *Meuſe* and *Sambre* here united flow,
Nature's Defence againſt th' invading Foe:
Induſtrious Art her Strength of Walls ſupplies;
Before the Town the *Britiſh* Army lies.
The Works are mann'd; with Fury they contend;
Theſe thunder from the Plains, thoſe from the Walls defend.
Red Globes of Fire from bellowing Engines fly,
And lead a ſweeping Blaze, like Comets, thro' the Sky.
The kindl'd Region glows; with deaf'ning Sound
They burſt, their Iron Entrails hurl'd around
Strow with thick-ſcatter'd Deaths the Crimſon Ground.
See where the Genius of the War appears,
Nor ſhuns the Labour, nor the Danger fears!
In Clouds of ſulph'rous Smoke he ſhines more bright,
For Glory round him waits with Beams of living Light.
At length the widen'd Gates a Conqueſt own,
And to his Arms reſign th' abandon'd Town.

Here, from the Field return'd, with Olive crown'd,
Applauding Throngs their welcome Prince ſurround:
Bright Honours in his glorious Entry ſhine,
And Peace reſtor'd concludes the Great Deſign.

Long o'er the Figur'd Work, with vaſt Surprize,
Admiring *Neptune* roll'd his raviſh'd Eyes;
Then riſing from his Throne, thus call'd aloud:
Ye lovely Daughters of the briny Flood!
Haſte, comb your Silver Locks, and ſtreight prepare
To fill my Train, and gaze in upper Air.
This Day Majeſtick Glories you ſhall ſee;
Come all ye Watry Pow'rs, who under me
Your little Tridents weild, and rule the boiſterous Sea!
What God, that views the Triumphs here diſplay'd,
Can to ſuch Worth refuſe his Heavenly Aid?
He ſaid no more,—— but bade two *Tritons* ſound
Their crooked Shells, to ſpread the Summons round.
Thro' the wide Caves the Blaſt is heard afar;
With ſpeed two more provide his Azure Car,
A Concave Shell; two the finn'd Courſers join;
All wait officious round, and own th' accuſtom'd Sign.
The God aſcends; his better Hand ſuſtains
The three-fork'd Spear, his Left directs the Reins.
Thro' breaking Waves the Chariot mounts him high,
Before its thundring Courſe the frothy Waters fly;
He gains the Surface; on his either Side
The bright Attendants, rang'd with comely Pride,
Advance in juſt Array, and grace the pompous Tide.

Mean while *Britannia*'s King conſpicuous ſtood,
And from his Deck ſurvey'd the boundleſs Flood.
Smooth was the glaſſie Scene, the Sun beheld
His Face unclouded in the liquid Field.
The gazing *Nereids* in a ſhining Train
Incloſe the Ruler of the *Britiſh* Main,
And ſweetly ſing; ſuſpended Winds forbear
Their loud Complaints, the ſoothing Lay to hear.

Hail,

Hail, Sacred Charge! they cry; the Beauties We
Of *Neptune*'s Court, are come t' attend on thee,
Accept our offer'd Aid! thy potent Sway,
Unbounded by the Land, theſe watry Realms obey,
And We thy Subject-Pow'rs our duteous Homage pay.
See *Neptune*'s Self, inferiour in Command,
Preſents his Trident to thy honour'd Hand!
They ſaid; the Sire approach'd with Awe profound;
The Rite perform'd, their Shells the *Tritons* ſound;
Swell'd with the ſhrill Alarm, the joyful Billows bound.

Now from the Shore *Britannia* firſt deſcries
White Sails afar; then bulky Veſſels riſe
Nearer to View; her beating Heart foretells
The pleaſing News, and eager Tranſport feels.
Safe to her Arms Imperial *Neptune* bears
Th' entruſted Charge, then diving, diſappears.

FINIS.